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Literature and current events.—The great demand for a better understanding on the part of children of great issues in current events is compelling teachers to search for really worth-while material. Messrs. Speare and Norris of the faculty of the United States Naval Academy have compiled a book¹ of selections bearing on current problems which will prove helpful in this regard.

The fifty different selections are grouped under eight general headings. For example, under Group III, "Some Problems of Readjustment," we find "National Welfare Defined Industrially," a reprint from *The Saturday Evening Post*, being an extract from an article by Herbert Hoover. Under Group V, "The Essentials of World Peace," we find "Peace through Democracy" by Elihu Root. This article is a reprint from *International Conciliation* for August, 1917.

Every article has been chosen with regard to its English style, as well as the importance of the issues it presents. It offers opportunity to the student of coming in contact with the opinions of leading men on subjects of vital interest. The book is intended primarily for use in English classes, but may also be used in history and civics classes.

Physics in everyday life.—It is all too evident that the average high-school course in physics, by strict adherence to the conventional "forty experiments" and habitual catering to the requirements of the scientifically minded few, has largely forfeited its original advantage as that subject inherently most fascinating to the majority of boys. The introduction of more democratic "project" courses dealing directly with the multitude of mechanical appliances and phenomena within the practical experience of the ordinary citizen is, however, doing much to restore the subject to its rightful position and popularity.

A recent manual² of the newer type is rich in the sort of material needed by instructors seeking to place their work upon a more practical footing. The experiments in this book will appeal strongly to any boy with a normal taste for "taking things apart." Not merely the usual force pump, electric motor, and camera, but clocks, gas-heaters, thermos bottles, phonographs, telephones, vacuum cleaners, sewing machines, and a Ford engine, all are made to yield up their true inwardness to the inquiring student. So far as possible the kinds of apparatus selected are of the sort which "really do something." The cleaners clean, the wireless wires, and the sphygmometer is actually used to determine the blood pressure of the experimenters themselves. The practical bearings of the problems may perhaps be inferred from the series of studies

¹ MORRIS EDMUND SPEARE and WALTER BLAKE NORRIS, *Vital Forces in Current Events*. Ginn & Co., 1920. Pp. vii + 284. \$0.88.

² FREDERICK F. GOOD, *Laboratory Projects in Physics*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1920. Pp. xiii + 267.

comparing the cost of heating a given room by the different methods—wood and coal stove, fireplace, gas and electric heater, and basement furnace.

In most experiments the drawing of the apparatus is sufficiently clear to avoid the necessity of verbal instructions, while the points to be made are developed by a series of questions to which the pupils must discover the replies. Not a little is thus left to the intelligence and ingenuity of the individual.

As the familiar demonstrations of less concrete character are also included, the ninety-five experiments described afford a quite unusual option for both instructor and student. The Appendix gives a complete list of the apparatus required for each experiment, together with address of the proper supply house and the price prevailing in each instance.

A high-school economics text.—The significance of economic factors in social well-being makes instruction in economics a necessary feature of education for citizenship. That it may reach a maximum number of prospective citizens, it must be begun as early as the maturity of the pupils permits. It becomes increasingly evident that how early this may profitably be depends on the nature of the presentation. Experimentation to this end would be adequate justification for the large number of recent high-school texts in this field. Varying views on economic problems is, of course, a further explanation.

Professor Carver's text¹ has high merit both in its presentation and in its doctrines. It possesses clarity and progressive organization—two cardinal virtues in a textbook. Economic theories are introduced so gradually as to be freed as much as possible from difficulty, the opening chapters preparing for the later more technical discussions.

The theory of the textbook is that the solution of most economic problems lies in securing a properly "balanced" population. "Probably the most important of all problems of statesmanship, and at the same time one of the most difficult, is that of balancing the population so that no particular class of labor is either oversupplied or undersupplied with respect to any other class." Reference is made here not merely to particular crafts or trades but to all types of productive agents, skilled and unskilled, managerial and investing.

Distinctly opposed to socialism, the book advocates a minimum of regulation or compulsion.

A liberalist in economics is one who believes in the freedom of the individual rather than in compulsion. He believes that individuals will, without compulsion and by voluntary agreement, do most of the things that are necessary to provide for the needs of the community. He believes that it is not necessary to impose upon the individual the authority either of a benevolent despot or of a well-meaning majority [p. 387].

¹ THOMAS NIXON CARVER, *Elementary Economics*. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1920. Pp. viii+400. \$1.72.